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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Wednesday, April 13, 1932.

(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

Subject: "Vitamin C" Information from the Bureau of Home Economics,  
U.S.D.A.

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Here's another Wednesday and it's time to talk about another vitamin. Two weeks ago we discussed vitamin A. Last week we talked about vitamin B. So today the third vitamin is the one on the program. This is vitamin C.

Years ago, as perhaps you've heard, it was very dangerous to take long sea trips. Beside the danger from wind, water and weather, there was danger from a mysterious disease called scurvy that was very likely to afflict both travelers and sailors on long voyages. People who had scurvy had painfully sore and stiff joints, sore gums with a loosening of the teeth, weakening of the bones and general weakness. It was years before the causes of this disease was discovered. But, in the course of time, people began to realize that diet had much to do with it. Food aboard ship was all salted or dried--no fresh food was carried. And this lack of fresh vegetables and fruits proved to be the difficulty. The vitamin C needed for good health by both grown-ups and children occurred in these foods and was lacking in the occangoing diets. The same trouble has appeared frequently in times of famine when people did not have enough fresh foods.

Fortunately few of us today, even if we sail round the world, are in danger of having scurvy, because our diet is varied enough to prevent it. But, unless vitamin C is definitely provided for in the family diet, there may not be enough of it to keep every ono in optimum health.

Children especially need a plentiful supply. They need it for their normal growth and for the good nutrition of their teeth. When they are not getting enough, they become irritable and lacking in stamina. Shortage of vitamin C may also be one of the causes of what is called rheumatism in both children and grown-ups. Because the body does not store this vitamin easily, it should be supplied each day.

So much for the way vitamin C or the lack of it affects the body.

The next question is: How to supply the right amount of this vitamin to the family?





Especially good sources are the citrus fruits--oranges, tangerines, grapefruit and lemons, also raw cabbage and turnips, and tomatoes--raw, cooked or canned. Probably the cheapest source of vitamin C is raw cabbage. Green peppers have as much of the vitamin per ounce as raw cabbage, but the cabbage is easier to use in generous quantities.

One point worth remembering is that vitamin C is likely to be destroyed in cooking--certainly in long-time cooking. Raw spinach has as much of this vitamin as raw cabbage, but, like most other vegetables, loses some during cooking. That's why it's a good thing to eat cabbage, peppers and even spinach raw. Finely chopped spinach, you know as well as other finely chopped vegetables may be mixed with butter and makes an excellent spread for the children's sandwiches. When you must cook such vegetables as spinach and cabbage, save as much of the vitamin as possible by quick-cooking methods.

There are two foods, however, that retain their vitamin C even when cooked or canned. These are tomatoes and peaches. And tomatoes and tomato juice are depended on by people of all ages, even the small baby, for a supply of this vitamin.

Other excellent sources of the vitamin are fruits, because so many of them are eaten raw. Apples, bananas, peaches, and pineapple, though they have only a third as much vitamin C as oranges and other citrus fruits, are a good source. This is because most people like them so well that they eat plenty of them--when they are cheap enough, of course.

The institution of raw fruit cocktail or sliced raw fruit for desserts is often better for the family than a pudding or a pie, partly because it provides these useful vitamins.

As for the children, vitamin C as I said, is particularly important for them. The modern baby is taking orange juice or tomato juice every day. Children a bit older and past the sieved-food stage can take their raw vegetables finely chopped in attractive sandwiches. Mixed with a little creamed butter, the chopped cabbage, for example, can be spread between thin slices of bread and children will enjoy it.

The rest of the family can have their cabbage in cold slaw or cabbage salad to which for variety other raw vegetables may be added.

How to work vitamin C in the family's simple dinner menus? I'll give you an easy example. Here it is: Baked stuffed peppers; Scalloped tomatoes; Graham muffins, Cold slaw and, for dessert Baked custard. The peppers, the tomatoes, and the cold slaw salad all feature vitamin C,

I'll repeat that menu now to be sure you have it. And then I'll give you a recipe for stuffed green peppers.

The menu: Baked stuffed peppers; Scalloped tomatoes; Graham muffins; Cold slaw, and Baked custard. Almost a complete oven baked meal you see.

If you have a place in your files for good recipes for using left-overs, I hope you'll put the stuffed pepper recipe right there. Stuffed peppers are good way of using up left-over bits of meat, left-over boiled rice or bread crumbs.



To serve six people stuffed peppers, you'll need

6 green peppers  
2 cups of flaky cooked rice, or bread crumbs  
2 tablespoons of butter or other fat  
2 cups of ground cooked meat  
1 small onion, chopped fine  
1/2 teaspoon of salt--or salt to taste  
1/4 to 1/2 cup of chili sauce, catsup or meat gravy, and  
1/2 cup of buttered bread crumbs.

That's quite a list. Did you get every one of those eight ingredients? I'll repeat them to make sure. (Repeat.)

Cut off the stem ends of the peppers. Remove the seeds. Then boil the pepper shells for 5 minutes in lightly salted water. Now drain them. Mix the other ingredients and stuff the peppers with the mixture. Cover with the buttered crumbs and bake in a moderate oven for about 30 minutes, or until the peppers are tender and the crumbs are brown.

Some notes on lawns and gardens tomorrow.

